



The United Methodist Church

North Carolina Conference-Raleigh Area, 700 Waterfield Ridge Place, Garner, NC 27529
Western North Carolina Conference-Charlotte Area, PO Box 2757, Huntersville, NC 28070

December 10, 2019

Dear Members of United Methodist Churches across North Carolina,

As we enter the season of Advent and prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, we remember that Jesus began his life fleeing persecution as a refugee in Egypt. (Matthew 2:13-18)

On September 26, the White House issued an Executive Order (EO 13888) that may drastically reduce, if not entirely stop, the resettlement of refugees in our state. We are deeply concerned that this executive order will prolong family separation for refugee families, create chaos and confusion about where refugees can be resettled, and leave refugees, former refugees, and United States citizens without supportive services. The administration has also proposed a refugee admissions goal of 18,000 refugees for this year which stands in stark contrast to the historic average goal of 95,000 refugees here in the United States.

Our Christian faith calls us to extend hospitality and offer a chance for refugees to rebuild their lives in safety and dignity. As United Methodists, we are called to “provide wherever possible pastoral care and crisis intervention to refugees.” (Book of Resolutions, 3281) This proposal is contrary to Scripture which calls us to “show hospitality to strangers,” particularly those in need (Lev. 19:33-34; Matt. 25:35; Heb. 13:2).

In response, we invite you to contact your Senators and Representatives to let them know that welcoming refugees is an important matter of love and justice.

You might choose to use this template letter:

Dear [elected official],

I am one of your constituents and a United Methodist. My faith calls me to advocate for and welcome refugees. I call on you to do the same: stop the Administration from cutting the number of refugees the U.S. admits next year as proposed in Executive Order 13888.

As a Christian, I believe that the words in Leviticus 19:33-34 present God’s vision for welcoming refugees. “The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.”

And, as a United Methodist, my church teaches that “Migrant rights are human Rights” (cf. United Methodist Church Resolution #6025 Globalization and its Impact on Human Dignity and Human Rights). The United Methodist Church reminds us “Christians do not approach the issue of migration from the perspective of tribe or nation, but from within a faith community of love and welcome” (cf. United Methodist Church Resolution #6028 Global Migration and the Quest for Justice).

I urge you to reject lowering the cap of refugees admitted to the U.S. in 2020. Please return to resettling 95,000 refugees in 2020.

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Justice and hospitality for refugees is critical to our identity as Americans. It is also vital to my Christian faith. As a follower of Jesus, loving my neighbors calls me to take legislative action to welcome refugees.

Thank you for your time and attention to this very important matter.

With appreciation,
[Your information]

May we all embrace a Christian witness which “makes room at the inn” (Luke 2:7) for our brothers and sisters across the world.

In Advent Hope,

Bishop Hope Morgan Ward
North Carolina Conference
United Methodist Church

Bishop Carlton P. Minnick, Jr., Retired
Raleigh, NC

Bishop William H. Willimon, Retired
Durham, NC

Bishop Paul L. Leeland
Western North Carolina Conference
United Methodist Church

Bishop Lawrence J. McCleskey, Retired
Lake Junaluska, NC

Bishop Charlene P. Kammerer, Retired
Lake Junaluska, NC

Bishop Charles N. Crutchfield, Retired
Biltmore Lake, NC